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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Administrative Appeals Office (AAO)
20 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**



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DATE: DEC 15 2011

OFFICE: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER FILE:

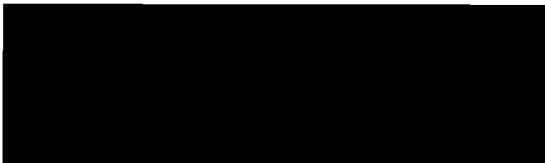


IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:



PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(L) of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(L)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:



INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All of the documents related to this matter have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied by us in reaching our decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. The specific requirements for filing such a request can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. All motions must be submitted to the office that originally decided your case by filing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630. Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires that any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The Director, California Service Center, denied the petition for a nonimmigrant visa. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be sustained.

The petitioner claims to be engaged in the transportation, installation, maintenance and repair of Wind Turbine equipment. The petitioner states that it is an affiliate of [REDACTED] located in Canada. The foreign entity petitioned United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant intracompany transferee (L-1A) pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(L). The petitioner seeks to employ the beneficiary as Vice President, Area Manager North America for a period of one year to open a new office in the United States.

The director denied the petition on March 24, 2009, concluding that the record contains insufficient evidence to demonstrate that: (1) the petitioner has secured sufficient physical premises to house the new operation; and (2) that the beneficiary has been employed in a primarily executive or managerial capacity by the foreign company. The petitioner submitted an appeal on April 27, 2009.

To establish eligibility under section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act, the petitioner must meet certain criteria. Specifically, within three years preceding the beneficiary's application for admission into the United States, a firm, corporation, or other legal entity, or an affiliate or subsidiary thereof, must have employed the beneficiary for one continuous year. Furthermore, the beneficiary must seek to enter the United States temporarily to continue rendering his or her services to the same employer or a subsidiary or affiliate thereof in a managerial, executive, or specialized knowledge capacity.

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(3) further states that an individual petition filed on Form I-129 shall be accompanied by:

- (i) Evidence that the petitioner and the organization which employed or will employ the alien are qualifying organizations as defined in paragraph (l)(1)(ii)(G) of this section.
- (ii) Evidence that the alien will be employed in an executive, managerial, or specialized knowledge capacity, including a detailed description of the services to be performed.
- (iii) Evidence that the alien has at least one continuous year of full time employment abroad with a qualifying organization within the three years preceding the filing of the petition.
- (iv) Evidence that the alien's prior year of employment abroad was in a position that was managerial, executive or involved specialized knowledge and that the alien's prior education, training, and employment qualifies

him/her to perform the intended services in the United States; however, the work in the United States need not be the same work which the alien performed abroad.

In addition, the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(3)(v) states that if the petition indicates that the beneficiary is coming to the United States as a manager or executive to open or to be employed in a new office in the United States, the petitioner shall submit evidence that:

- (A) Sufficient physical premises to house the new office have been secured;
- (B) The beneficiary has been employed for one continuous year in the three year period preceding the filing of the petition in an executive or managerial capacity and that the proposed employment involved executive or managerial authority over the new operation; and
- (C) The intended United States operation, within one year of the approval of the petition, will support an executive or managerial position as defined in paragraphs (l)(1)(ii)(B) or (C) of this section, supported by information regarding:
 - (1) The proposed nature of the office describing the scope of the entity, its organizational structure, and its financial goals;
 - (2) The size of the United States investment and the financial ability of the foreign entity to remunerate the beneficiary and to commence doing business in the United States; and
 - (3) The organizational structure of the foreign entity.

If a petition indicates that a beneficiary is coming to the United States to open a "new office," it must show that it is ready to commence doing business immediately upon approval. At the time of filing the petition to open a "new office," a petitioner must affirmatively demonstrate that it has acquired sufficient physical premises to commence business, that it has the financial ability to commence doing business in the United States, and that it will support the beneficiary in a managerial or executive position within one year of approval. *See generally*, 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(3)(v). If approved, the beneficiary is granted a one-year period of stay to open the "new office." 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(7)(i)(A)(3).

The first issue to be addressed is whether sufficient physical premises to house the new office have been secured. The Form I-129 requests L-1A nonimmigrant classification for the beneficiary from February 1, 2009 until January 31, 2010. In response to the director's request for evidence, the petitioner submitted a document entitled, "Executive Suite Office Lease," between the petitioner and [REDACTED]. The contract stated that the petitioner leased an office space from February 1, 2009 until July 31, 2009. In the denial decision, the director noted that the lease was not valid for the entire year requested on the

Form I-129. On appeal, the petitioner submits an amendment to the initial lease indicating that the term of the lease “is extended for a period of 12 months from April 1, 2009 so that it shall expire on March 31, 2010. In addition, the petitioner submitted a letter, dated February 5, 2009, from [REDACTED] that confirmed that the petitioner “is currently a tenant in good standing.”

On appeal, counsel for the petitioner explained that the petitioner’s office space is 166.28 square feet and the “space meets the Petitioner’s current needs.” Counsel further states that the “majority of the company’s employees will be travel technicians who will be performing their duties at client sites across the U.S. where the turbines are located, per the service contracts.” Counsel also states that the initial office space will house only the Vice President Area Manager and one administrative staff. Finally, counsel states that “as the business grows, [the petitioner] anticipates that it will require additional office space and storage space and will secure such space as necessary.” Upon review, the AAO will withdraw this issue as the petitioner provided sufficient evidence of physical premises to house the new office.

The second issue to be addressed in this proceeding is whether the petitioner has established that the beneficiary has been employed abroad in a primarily managerial or executive capacity.

Section 101(a)(44)(A) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44)(A), provides:

The term “managerial capacity” means an assignment within an organization in which the employee primarily-

- (i) manages the organization, or a department, subdivision, function, or component of the organization;
- (ii) supervises and controls the work of other supervisory, professional, or managerial employees, or manages an essential function within the organization, or a department or subdivision of the organization;
- (iii) if another employee or other employees are directly supervised, has the authority to hire and fire or recommend those as well as other personnel actions (such as promotion and leave authorization), or if no other employee is directly supervised, functions at a senior level within the organizational hierarchy or with respect to the function managed; and
- (iv) exercises discretion over the day-to-day operations of the activity or function for which the employee has authority. A first-line supervisor is not considered to be acting in a managerial capacity merely by virtue of the supervisor’s supervisory duties unless the employees supervised are professional.

Section 101(a)(44)(B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44)(B), provides:

The term “executive capacity” means an assignment within an organization in which the employee primarily-

- (i) directs the management of the organization or a major component or function of the organization;
- (ii) establishes the goals and policies of the organization, component, or function;
- (iii) exercises wide latitude in discretionary decision-making; and
- (iv) receives only general supervision or direction from higher level executives, the board of directors, or stockholders of the organization.

Upon review of the record, the AAO withdraws the director’s decision and sustains the appeal. The petitioner indicated that the beneficiary held the position of Vice President, Area Manager with [REDACTED]. The petitioner further clarified the beneficiary’s duties abroad when responding to the request for evidence and in its brief on appeal. In addition, the petitioner submitted an organizational chart for the foreign company that indicated the chief executive officer supervised the beneficiary who in turn supervised the finance and administration manager and three travel technicians. According to the documentation, it appears that the beneficiary supervised professional employees who relieved him from performing non-qualifying duties.

In visa petition proceedings, the burden of proving eligibility for the benefit sought remains entirely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. Here, that burden has been met. Accordingly, the appeal will be sustained.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained.